LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 163
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

# Sex Life in Greece and Rome

LITTLE BLUE BOOK NO. 163
Edited by E. Haldeman-Julius

# Sex Life in Greece and Rome

G. Lowes Dickinson
and Others

HALDEMAN-JULIUS COMPANY
GIRARD, KANSAS

Copyright, 1924,
Haldeman-Julius Company

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

# SEX LIFE IN GREECE AND ROME

# THE GREEK VIEW OF WOMAN

G. Lowes Dickinson

Nothing more profoundly distinguishes the Hellenic from the modern view of life than the estimate in which women were held by the Greeks. Their opinion on this point was partly the cause and partly the effect of that preponderance of the idea of the State on which we have already dwelt, and from which it followed naturally enough that marriage should be regarded primarily as a means of producing healthy and efficient citizens. This view is best illustrated by the institutions of such a State as Sparta, where, as we saw, the woman was specially trained for maternity, and connections outside the marriage tie were sanctioned by custom and opinion, if they were such as were likely to lead to healthy offspring. Further, it may be noted that in almost every State the exposure of deformed or sickly infants was encouraged by the law, the child being thus regarded, from the beginning, as a member of the State, rather than as a member of the family.

The same view is reflected in the speculations of political philosophers. Plato, indeed, in his Republic, goes so far as to eliminate the family relation altogether. Not only is the whole connection between men and women to be regulated by the State, in respect both of the persons and of the limit of age within which they may associate, but the children as soon as they are born are to be carried off to a common nursery, there to be reared together,

undistinguished by the mothers, who will suckle indifferently any infant that might happen to be assigned to them for the purpose. Here, as in other instances, Plato goes far beyond the limits set by the current sentiment of the Greeks, and in his later work is reluctantly constrained to abandon his scheme of community of wives and children. Yet even there he makes it compulsory on every man to marry between the age of thirty and thirty-five, under penalty of fine and civil disabilities. Plato, no doubt, as we have said, exaggerates the opinions of his time; but the view, which he pushes to its extreme, of the subordination of the family to the State, was one, as we have already pointed out, which did predominate in Greece. It reappears in a sober form in the treatise of Aristotle. He, too, would regulate by law both the age at which marriages should take place and the number of children that should be produced, and would have all deformed infants exposed. And here, no doubt, he is speaking in conformity if not with the practice, at least with the feeling of Greece. The modern conception that the marriage relation is a matter of private concern and that any individual has a right to wed whom and when he will, and to produce children at his own discretion, regardless of all considerations of health and decency, was one altogether alien to the Greeks. In theory at least, and to some extent in practice (as, for example, in the case of Sparta), they recognized that the production of children was a business of supreme import to the State, and that it was right and proper

that it should be regulated by law with a view to the advantage of the whole community.

And if now we turn from considering the family in its relation to the State to regard it in its relation to the individual, we are struck once more by a divergence from the modern point of view, or rather from the view which is supposed to prevail, particularly by writers of fiction, at any rate, in modern English life. In ancient Greece, so far as our knowledge goes, there was little or no romance connected with the marriage tie. Marriage was a means of producing legitimate children; that is how it is defined by Demosthenes; and we have no evidence that it was ever regarded as anything more. In Athens we know that marriages were commonly arranged by the father, much as they are in modern France, on grounds of age, property, connection and the like, and without any regard for the inclination of the parties concerned. And an interesting passage in Xenophon indicates a point of view quite consonant with this accepted practice. God, he says, ordained the institution of marriage; but on what grounds? Not in the least for the sake of the personal relation that might be established between the husband and wife, but for ends quite external and indifferent to any affection that might exist between them. First, for the perpetuation of the human race; secondly, to raise up protectors for the father in his old age; thirdly, to secure an appropriate division of labour, the man performing the outdoor work, the woman guarding and superintending at home, and each thus fulfilling duly the func-

tion for which they were designed by nature. This eminently prosaic way of conceiving the marriage relation is also, it would seem, eminently Greek; and it leads us to consider more particularly the opinion prevalent in Greece of the nature and duty of women in general.

Here the first point to be noticed is the wide difference of the view represented in the Homeric poems from that which meets us in the historic period. Readers of the Iliad and the Odyssey will find depicted there, amid all the barbarity of an age of rapine and war, relations between men and women so tender, faithful and beautiful, that they may almost stand as universal types of the ultimate human ideal. Such, for example, is the relation between Odysseus and Penelope, the wife waiting year by year for the husband whose fate is unknown, wooed in vain by suitors who waste her substance and wear her life, nightly "watering her bed with her tears" for twenty weary years, till at last the wanderer returns, and "at once her knees were loosened and her heart melted within her . . . and she fell a-weeping and ran straight towards him, and cast her hands about his neck, and kissed his head;" for "even as the sight of the land is welcome to mariners, so welcome to her was the sight of her lord, and her white arms would never quite leave hold of his neck."

Such, again is the relation between Hector and Andromache as described in the well-known scene of the Iliad, where the wife comes out with her babe to take leave of the husband on his way to battle. "It were better for me,"

she cries, "to go down to the grave if I lose thee; for never will any comfort be mine, when once thou, even thou, hast met thy fate, but only sorrow. . . . Thou art to me father and lady mother, yea, and brother, even as thou art my goodly husband. Come now, have pity and abide here upon the tower, lest thou make thy child an orphan and thy wife a widow." Hector answers with the plea of honour. He cannot draw back, but he foresees defeat; and in his anticipation of the future nothing is so bitter as the fate he fears for his wife. "Yet doth the conquest of the Trojans hereafter not so much trouble me, neither Hekabe's own, neither King Priam's, neither my brethren's, the many and brave that shall fall in the dust before their foemen, as doth thine anguish in the day when some mail-clad Achaian shall lead thee weeping and rob thee of the light of freedom. . . . But me in death may the heaped-up earth be covering, ere I hear thy crying and thy carrying into captivity."

But most striking of all the portraits of women to be found in Homer, and most typical of a frank and healthy relation between the sexes, is the account of Nausicaa given in the Odyssey. Ulysses, shipwrecked and naked, battered and covered with brine, surprises Nausicaa and her maidens as they are playing at ball on the shore. The attendants run away, but Nausicaa remains to hear what the stranger has to say. He asks her for shelter and clothing; and she grants the request, with an exquisite courtesy and a freedom from all embarrassment which becomes only the more

marked and the more delightful when, as she sees him emerge from the bath, clothed and beautiful, she cannot restrain the exclamation, "would that such a one might be called my husband, dwelling here, and that it might please him here to abide." About the whole scene there is a freshness and a fragrance as of early morning, and a tone so natural, free and frank, that in the face of this rustic idyl the later centuries sicken and faint, like candlelight in the splendour of the dawn.

If we had only Homer to give us our ideas of the Greeks, we might conclude, from such passages as these, that they had a conception of woman and her relation to man, finer and nobler, in some respects, than that of modern times. But, in fact, the Homeric poems represent a civilisation which had passed away before the opening of the period with which at present we are chiefly concerned. And in the interval, for reasons which we need not here attempt to state, a change had taken place in the whole way of regarding the female sex. So far, at any rate, as our authorities enable us to judge, woman, in the historic age, was conceived to be so inferior to man that he recognised in her no other end than to minister to his pleasure or to become the mother of his children. Romance and the higher companionship of intellect and spirit do not appear (with certain notable exceptions) to have been commonly sought or found in this relation. Woman, in fact, was regarded as a means, not as an end; and was treated in a manner consonant with this view. Of this estimate many illus-

trations might be adduced from the writers of the fifth and fourth centuries. Plato, for example, classes together "children, women, and servants," and states generally that there is no branch of human industry in which the female sex is not inferior to the male. Similarly, Aristotle insists again and again on the natural inferiority of women, and illustrates it by such quaint observations as the following, "a man would be considered a coward who was only as brave as a brave woman, and a woman as a chatter-box who was only as modest as a good man." But the most striking example, perhaps, because the most unconscious, of this habitual way of regarding women is to be found in the funeral oration put by Thucydides into the mouth of Pericles, where the speaker, after suggesting what consolation he can to the fathers of the slain, turns to the woman with the brief but significant exhortation: "If I am to speak of womanly virtues of those of you who will henceforth be widows let me sum them up in one short admonition: To a woman not to show more weakness than is natural to her sex is a great glory, and not to be talked about for good or for evil among men."

The sentiments of the poets are less admissible as evidence. But some of them are so extreme that they may be adduced as a further indication of a point of view whose prevalence alone could render them even dramatically plausible. Such for example is the remark which Euripides puts into the mouth of his Medea, "Women are impotent for good, but clever contrivers of all evil," or that of one of

the characters of Menander, "A woman is necessarily an evil, and he is a lucky man who catches her in the mildest form." While the general Greek view of the dependence of woman on man is well expressed in the words of Aethra, in the "Suppliants" of Euripides—"It is proper for women who are wise to let men act for them in everything."

In accordance with this conception of the inferiority of the female sex, and partly as a cause, partly as an effect of it, we find that the position of the wife in ancient Greece was simply that of the domestic drudge. To stay at home and mind the house was her recognised ideal. "A free woman should be bounded by the street door," says one of the characters in Menander; and another writer discriminates as follows the functions of the two sexes: "War politics, and public speaking are the sphere of man; that of woman is to keep house, to stay at home and to receive and tend her husband." We are not surprised, therefore, to find that the symbol of women is the tortoise; and in the following burlesque passage from Aristophanes we shall recognize, in spite of the touch of caricature, the genuine features of the Greek wife, Praxagora is recounting the merits and services of women:

"They dip their wool in hot water according to the ancient plan, all of them without exception, and never make the slightest innovation. They sit and cook, as of old. They carry upon their heads, as of old. They conduct the Thesmophoriae, as of old. They wear out their

husbands, as of old. They buy sweets, as of old. They take their wine neat, as of old."

And that this was also the kind of ideal approved by their lords and masters, and that any attempt to pass beyond it was resented, is amusingly illustrated in the following extract from the same poet, where Lysistrata explains the growing indignation of the women at the bad conduct of affairs by the men, and the way in which their attempts to interfere were resented. The comments of the "magistrate" typify, of course, the man's point of view.

"Think of our old moderation and gentleness,
think how we bore with your pranks, and
were still,
All through the days of your former prognacity, all through the war that is over and
spent:
Not that (be sure) we approved of your policy;
never our griefs you allowed us to vent.
Well we perceived your mistakes and mismanmanagement.
Often at home on our housekeeping cares,
Often we heard of some foolish proposal you
made for conducting the public affairs.
Then would we question you mildly and pleasantly, inwardly grieving, but outwardly
gay;
'Husband, how goes it abroad?' we would ask
of him; 'what have ye done in Assembly
to-day?
What would ye write on the side of the Treatystone?'
Husband says angrily, 'What's that to you?

You hold your tongue!' And I held it accordingly.

STRATYLLIS.

That is a thing which I never would do!

MAGISTRATE.

Ma'am, if you hadn't you'd soon have repented it.

LYSISTRATA.

Therefore I held it, and spake not a word.
Soon of another tremendous absurdity, wilder and worse than the former we heard.
'Husband,' I say, with a tender solicitude, 'Why have you passed such a foolish decree?'
Viciously, moodily, glaring askance at me, 'Stick to your spinning, my mistress,' says he,
'Else you will speedily find it the worse for you! war is the care and the business of men!'

MAGISTRATE.

Zeus! 'twas a worthy reply, and an excellent!

LYSISTRATA.

What! you unfortunate, shall we not then,
Then, when we see you perplexed and incompetent, shall we not tender advice to the state!"

The conception thus indicated in burlesque of the proper place of woman is expressed more seriously, from the point of view of the average man in the "Œconomicus" of Xenophon. Ischomachus, the hero of that work, with whom we have already made acquaintance, gives an account of his own wife, and of the way in which he had trained her. When

he married her, he explains she was not yet fifteen, and had been brought up with the utmost care "that she might see, hear, and ask as little as possible." Her accomplishments were weaving and a sufficient acquaintance with all that concerns the stomach; and her attitude towards her husband she expressed in the single phrase: "Everything rests with you; my duty, my mother said, is simply to be modest." Ischomachus proceeds to explain to her the place he expects her to fill; she is to suckle his children, to cook, and to superintend the house; and for this purpose God has given her special gifts, different from but not necessarily inferior to those of man. Husband and wife naturally supply one another's deficiencies; and if the wife performs her function worthily she may even make herself the ruling partner, and be sure that as she grows older she will be held not less but more in honour, as the guardian of her children and the stewardess of her husband's goods—in Xenophon's view, in fact, the inferiority of the woman almost disappears; and the sentiment approximates closely to that of Tennyson—

> "either sex alone
> Is half itself, and in true marriage lies
> Nor equal, nor unequal; each fulfils
> Defect in each."

Such a conception, however, of the "complementary" relation of woman to man, does not exclude a conviction of her essential inferiority. And this conviction, it can hardly be disputed, was a cardinal point in the Greek view of life.

## PROTESTS AGAINST THE COMMON VIEW OF WOMAN

Nevertheless, there are not wanting indications, both in theory and practice, of a protest against it. In Sparta, as we have already noticed, girls, instead of being confined to the house, were brought up in the open air among the boys, trained in gymnastics and accustomed to run and wrestle naked. And Plato, modelling his view upon this experience, makes no distinction of the sexes in his ideal republic. Women, he admits, are generally inferior to men, but they have similar, if lower capacities and powers. There is no occupation or art for which they may not be fitted by nature and education; and he would therefore have them take their share in government war, as well as in the various mechanical trades. "None of the occupations," he says, "which comprehend the ordering of a state, belong to woman as woman, nor yet to man as man; but natural gifts are to be found here and there, in both sexes alike; and, so far as her nature is concerned, the woman is admissible to all pursuits as well as the man; though in all of them the woman is weaker than the man."

In adopting this attitude Plato stands alone not only among Greeks, but one might almost say, among mankind, till we come to the latest views of the nineteenth century. But there is another Greek, the poet Euripides, who, without advancing any theory about the proper position of women, yet displays so intimate an

understanding of their difficulties, and so warm and close a sympathy with their griefs, that some of his utterances may stand to all time as documents of the dumb and age-long protest of the weaker against the stronger sex. In illustration we may cite the following lines from the "Medea," applicable, *mutatis mutandis*, to how many generations of suffering wives?

"Of all things that have life and sense we women are most wretched. For we are compelled to buy with gold a husband who is also —worst of all!—the master of our person. And on his character, good or bad, our whole fate depends. For divorce is regarded as a disgrace to a woman and she cannot repudiate her husband. Then coming as she does into the midst of manners and customs strange to her, she would need the gift of divination—unless she has been taught at home—to know how best to treat her bed-fellow. And if we manage so well that our husband remains faithful to us, and does not break away, we may think ourselves fortunate; if not, there is nothing for it but death. A man when he is vexed at home can go out and find relief among his friends or acquaintances; but we women have none to look to but him. They tell us we live a sheltered life at home while they go to the wars; but that is nonsense. For I would rather go into battle thrice than bear a child once."

Hitherto we have been speaking mainly of the position of the wife in Greece. It is necessary now to say a few words about that class of women who were called in the Greek tongue

Hetaerae; and who are by some supposed to have represented, intellectually at least, a higher level of culture than the other members of their sex. In exceptional cases, this, no doubt, was the fact. Aspasia, for example, the mistress of Pericles, was famous for her powers of mind. According to Plato she was an accomplished rhetorician, and the real composer of the celebrated funeral oration of Pericles; and Plutarch asserts that she was courted and admired by the statesmen and philosophers of Greece. But Aspasia cannot be taken as a type of the Hetaerae of Greece. That these women, by the variety and freedom of their life, may and must have acquired certain qualities of character and mind that could hardly be developed in the seclusion of the Greek home, may readily be admitted; we know, for example, that they cultivated music and the power of conversation; and were welcome guests at supper-parties. But we have no evidence that the relations which they formed rested as a rule on any but the simplest physical basis. The real distinction, under this head, between the Greek point of view and our own, appears to lie rather in the frankness with which this whole class of relations was recognised by the Greeks. There were temples in honour of Aphrodite Pandemos, the goddess of illicit love, and festivals celebrated in her honour; statues were erected of famous courtesans, of Phryne, for example, at Delphi, between two kings; and philosophers and statesmen lived with their mistresses openly, without any loss of public reputation. Every

man, said the orator Demosthenes, requires besides his wife at least two mistresses; and this statement, made as a matter of course in open court, is perhaps the most curious illustration we possess of the distinction between the Greek civilisation and our own, as regards not the fact itself but the light in which it was viewed.

## MARRIAGE: AND THE ROMAN LADY

W. Warde Fowler, M. A.

In order to appreciate the position of women of various types in the society we are examining, it is necessary to make it clear what Roman marriage originally and ideally meant. In any society, it will be found that the position and influence of woman can be fairly well discerned from the nature of the marriage ceremony and the conditions under which it is carried out. At Rome, in all periods of her history, a *iustum matrimonium*, i. e. a marriage sanctioned by law and religion, and therefore entirely legal in all its results, was a matter of great moment, not to be achieved without many forms and ceremonies. The reason for this elaboration is obvious, at any rate to any one who has some acquaintance with ancient life in Greece or Italy. As we shall see later on, the house was a residence for the divine members of the family, as well as the human; the entrance, therefore, of a bride into the household,—of one, that is, who had no part nor lot in that family life—meant some straining of the relation between the divine and human members. The human part of the family brings in a new member, but it has to be assured that the divine part is willing to accept her before the step taken can be regarded as complete. She has to enter the family in such a way as to be able to share in its *sacra*, i. e. in the worship of the household spirits, the

ancestors in their tombs, or in any special cult attached to the family. In order to secure this eligibility, she was in the earliest times subjected to a ceremony which was clearly of a sacramental character, and which had as its effect the transference of the bride from the hand (*manus*) of her father, i. e. from absolute subjection to him as the head of her own family, to the hand of her husband, i. e. to absolute subjection to him as the head of her new family.

This sacramental ceremony was called *confarreatio*, because a sacred cake, made of the old Italian grain called *far*, and offered to Jupiter Farreus, was partaken of by bride and bridegroom, in the presence of the Pontifex Maximus, the Flamen Dialis, and ten other witnesses. At such a ceremony the auspices had of course been taken, and apparently a victim was also slain, and offered probably to Ceres, the skin of which was stretched over two seats (*sellae*), on which the bride and bridegroom had to sit. These details of the early form of patrician marriage are only mentioned here to make the religious character of the Roman idea of the rite quite plain; in other words, to prove that the entrance of a bride into a family from outside was a matter of very great difficulty and seriousness, not to be achieved without special aid and the intervention of the gods. We may even go so far as to say that the new mater-familias was in some sort a priestess of the household, and that she must undergo a solemn initiation before assuming that position. And we may still further

illustrate the mystical religious nature of the whole rite, if we remember that throughout Roman history no one could hold the priesthood of Jupiter (*flaminium diale*) or that of Mars or Quirinus, or of the Rex sacrorum, who had not been born of parents wedded by *confarreatio*, and that in each case the priest himself must be married by the same ceremony. This last mentioned fact may also serve to remind us that it was not only the family and its sacra, its life and its maintenance, that called for the ceremonies making up an *austum matrimonium*, but also the State and its *sacra*, its life and its maintenance. As *confarreatio* had as its immediate object the providing of a *Materfamilias* fully qualified in all her various functions, and as its further object the providing of persons legally qualified to perform the most important *sacra* of the state; so marriage, in whatever form, had as its object at once the maintenance of the family and its *sacra* and the production of men able to serve the State in peace and war. To be a Roman citizen you must be the product of a *iustum matrimonium*. From this initial fact flow all the *iura*, or rights which together make up citizenship; whether the private rights, which enable you to hold and transfer and to inherit property under the shelter of the Roman law, or the public rights, which protect your person against violence and murder, and enable you to give your vote in the public assembly and to seek election to magistracies.

Marriage then was a matter of the utmost importance in Roman life, and in all the forms

of it we find this importance marked by due solemnity of ritual. In two other forms, besides *confarreatio*, the bride could be brought under the hand of her husband, viz., *coemptio* and *usus*, with which we are not here specially concerned; for long before the last century of the Republic all three methods had become practically obsolete, or were only occasionally used for particular purposes. In the course of time it had been found more convenient for a woman to remain after her marriage in the hand of her father, or if he were dead, in the "*tutela*" of a guardian (tutor), than to pass into that of her husband; for in the latter case her property became absolutely his. The natural tendency to escape from the restrictions of marital *manus* may be illustrated by a case such as the following: a woman under the *tutela* of a guardian wishes to marry; if she does so and passes under the *manus* of her husband, her *tutor* loses all control over her property, which may probably be of great importance for the family she is leaving; he therefore naturally objects to such a marriage, and urges that she should be married without *manus*. In fact the interests of her own family would often clash with those of the one she was about to enter, and a compromise could be effected by the abandonment of marriage *cum manu*.

Now this, the abandonment of marriage *cum manu*, means simply that certain legal consequences of the marriage ceremony were dropped, and with them just those parts of the ceremony which produced these consequences,

Otherwise the marriage was absolutely as valid for all purposes private and public as it could be made even by *confarreatio* itself. The sacramental part was absent and the survival of the features of marriage by purchase, which we may see in the form of *coemptio*, was also absent; but in all other respects the marriage ceremony was the same as in marriage *cum manu*. It retained all essential religious features, losing only a part of its legal character. It will be as well briefly to describe a Roman wedding of the type common in the last two centuries of the Republic.

To begin with, the boy and girl—for such they were, as we should look on them, even at the time of marriage—have been betrothed, in all probability, long before. Cicero tells us that he betrothed his daughter Tullia to Calpurnius Piso Frugi early in 66 B. C.; the marriage took place in 63. Tullia seems to have been born in 76, so that she was ten years old at the time of betrothal and thirteen at that of marriage. This is probably typical of what usually happened; and it shows that the matter was really entirely in the hands of the parents. It was a family arrangement, a *mariage de convenance*, as has been and is the practice among many peoples, ancient and modern. The betrothal was indeed a promise rather than a definite contract, and might be broken off without illegality; and thus if there were a strong dislike on the part of either girl or boy a way of escape could be found. However this may be, we may be sure that the idea of the marriage was not that of a union for love, though it was

distinguished from concubinage of an "*affectio maritalis*" as well as by legal forms, and though a true attachment might, and often did, as in modern times in like circumstances, arise out of it. It was the idea of the service of the family and the State that lay at the root of the union. This is well illustrated, like so many other Roman ideas, in the *Æneid* of Virgil. Those who persist in looking on Æneas with modern eyes, and convict him of perfidy towards Dido, forget that his passion for Dido was a sudden one, not sanctioned by the gods or by favourable auspices, and that the ultimate union with Lavinia, for whom he forms no such attachment, was one which would recommend itself to every Roman as justified by the advantage to the State. The poet, it is true, betrays his own intense humanity in his treatment of the fate of Dido, but he does so in spite of his theme,—the duty of every Roman to his family and the State. A Roman would no doubt fall in love, like a youth of any other nation, but his passion had nothing to do with his life of duty as a Roman. This idea of marriage had serious consequences, to which we shall return later on.

When the day for the wedding arrives, our bride assumes her bridal dress, laying aside the *toga praetexta* of her childhood and dedicating her dolls to the Lar of her family; and wearing the reddish veil (*flammeum*) and the woolen girdle fastened with a knot called the knot of Hercules, she awaits the arrival of the bridegroom in her father's house. Meanwhile the auspices are being taken; in earlier times

this was done by observing the flight of birds but now by examination of the entrails of a victim, apparently a sheep. If this is satisfactory the youthful pair declare their consent to the union and join their right hands as directed by a *pronuba*, i. e. a married woman, who acts as a kind of priestess. Then after another sacrifice and a wedding feast, the bride is conducted from her old home to that of her husband, accompanied by three boys, sons of living parents, one carrying a torch while the other two lead her by either hand; flute-players go before, and nuts are thrown to the boys. This *deductio*, charmingly described in the beautiful sixty-fifth poem of Catullus, is full of interesting detail which must be omitted here. When the bridegroom's house is reached, the bride smears the doorposts with fat and oil and ties a woollen fillet round each: she is then lifted over the threshold, is taken by her husband into the partnership of fire and water —the essentials of domestic life—and passes into the *atrium*. The morrow will find her a *materfamilias*, sitting among her maids in that *atrium*, or in the more private apartments behind it:

> Claudite ostia, virgines
> Lusimus satis. At boni
> Coniuges, bene vivite, et
> Munere assiduo valentem
> Exercete iuventam.

Even the dissipated Catullus could not but treat the subject of marriage with dignity and

tenderness, and in this last stanza of his poem he alludes to the duties of a married pair in language which would have satisfied the strictest Roman. He has also touched another chord which would echo in the heart of every good citizen, in the delicious lines which just precede those quoted, and anticipate the child—a son of course—that is to be born, and that will lie in his mother's arms holding out his little hands, and smiling on his father. Nothing can better illustrate the contrast in the mind of the Roman between passionate love and serious marriage than a comparison of this lovely poem with those which tell the sordid tale of the poet's intrigues with Lesbia (Clodia). The beauty and *gravitas* of married life as it used to be are still felt and still found, but the depths of human feeling are not stirred by them. Love lies beyond, is a fact outside the pale of the ordered life of the family or the State.

No one who studies this ceremonial of Roman marriage, in the light of the ideas it indicates and reflects, can avoid the conclusion that the position of the married woman must have been one of substantial dignity, calling for and calling out a corresponding type of character. Beyond doubt the position of the roman *materfamilias* was a much more dignified one than that of the Greek wife. She was far indeed from being a mere drudge or squaw; she shared with her husband in all the duties of the household, including those of religion, and within the house itself she was practically supreme. She lived in the *atrium*, and was not shut away

in a women's chamber; she nursed her own children and brought them up; she had entire control of the female slaves who were her maids; she took her meals with her husband, but sitting, not reclining, and abstaining from wine; in all practical matters she was consulted, and only on questions political or intellectual was she expected to be silent. When she went out arrayed in the graceful *stola matronalis*, she was treated with respect, and the passers-by made way for her; but it is characteristic of her position that she did not as a rule leave the house without the knowledge of her husband, or without an escort.

In keeping with this dignified position was the ideal character of the *materfamilias*. Ideal we must call it, for it does not in all respects coincide with the tradition of Roman women even in early times; but we must remember that at all periods of Roman history the woman whose memory survives is apt to be the woman who is not the ideal matron, but one who forces herself into notice by violating the traditions of womanhood. The typical matron would assuredly never dream of playing a part in history; her influence was behind the scenes, and therefore proportionally powerful. The legendary mother of Coriolanus (the Volumnia of Shakespeare), Cornelia the mother of the Gracchi, Aurelia, Cæsar's mother, and Julia his daughter did indirectly play a far greater part in public life than the loud and vicious ladies who have left behind them names famous or infamous; but they never claimed the recognition of their power.

This peculiar character of the Roman matron, a combination of dignity, industry, and practical wisdom, was exactly suited to attract the attention of a gentle philosopher like Plutarch, who loved, with genuine moral fervour, all that was noble and honest in human nature. Not only does he constantly refer to the Roman ladies and their character in his *Lives* and his *Morals*, but in his series of more than a hundred "Roman questions" the first nine, as well as many others, are concerned with marriage and the household life; and in his treatise called *Coniugalia praecepta* he reflects many of the features of the Roman matron. From him, in Sir Thomas North's translation, Shakespeare drew the inspiration which enabled him to produce on the Elizabethan stage at least one such typical matron. In Coriolanus he has followed Plutarch so closely that the reader may almost be referred to him as an authority; and in the contrast between the austere and dignified Volumnia and the passionate and voluptuous Cleopatra of the later play, the poet's imagination seems to have been guided by a true historical instinct.

We need not doubt that the austere matron of the old type survived into the age we are specially concerned with; but we hardly come across her in the literature of the time, just because she was living her own useful life, and did not seek publicity. Chance has indeed preserved for us on stone the story of a wonderful lady, whose early years of married life were spent in the trying time of the civil wars of 49-43 B. C., and who, if a devoted husband's

praises are to be trusted, as indeed they may be, was a woman of the finest Roman cast, and endowed with such a combination of practical virtues as we should hardly have expected even in a Roman matron. But we shall return to this inscription later on.

The ladies whom we meet with in Cicero's letters and in the other literature of the last age of the Republic are not of this type. Since the second Punic war the Roman lady has changed, like everything else Roman. It is not possible here to trace the history of the change in detail, but we may note that it seems to have begun within the household, in matters of dress and expense, and later on affected the life and bearing of women in society and politics. Marriages *cum manu* became unusual: the wife remained in the *potestas* of her father, who in most cases, doubtless, ceased to trouble himself about her, and as her property did not pass to her husband, she could not but obtain a new position of independence. Women began to be rich, and in the year 169 B. C. a law was passed (*lex Voconia*) forbidding women of the highest census (who alone would probably be concerned) to inherit legacies. Even before the end of the great war, and when private luxury would seem out of place, it had been proposed to abolish the Oppian law, which placed restrictions on the ornaments and apparel of women; and in spite of the vehement opposition of Cato, then a young man, the proposal was successful. At the same time divorce, which had probably never been impossible though it must have been rare, began to be a

common practice. We find to our surprise that the virtuous Æmilius Paullus, in other respects a model *paterfamilias*, put away his wife, and when asked why he did so, replied that a woman might be excellent in the eyes of her neighbours, but that only a husband could tell where the shoe pinched. And in estimating the changed position of women within the family we must not forget the fact that in the course of the long and unceasing wars of the second century, B. C., husbands were away from home for years together, and in innumerable cases must have perished by the sword or pestilence, or fallen into the hands of an enemy and been enslaved. It was inevitable that as the male population diminished, as it undoubtedly did in that century, the importance of woman should proportionately have increased. Unfortunately too, even when the husbands were at home, their wives sometimes seem to have wished to be rid of them. In 180 B. C. the consul Piso was believed to have been murdered by his wife, and whether the story be true or not, the suspicion is at least significant. In 154 two noble ladies, wives of consulares, were accused of poisoning their husbands and put to death by a council of their own relations. Though the evidence in these cases is not by any means satisfactory, yet we can hardly doubt that there was a tendency among women of the highest rank to give way to passion and excitement; the evidence for the Bacchanalian conspiracy of 186 B. C., in which women played a very prominent part, is explicit, and shows that there was a "new woman" even then, who

had ceased to be satisfied with austere life of the family and with the mental comfort supplied by the old religion, and was ready to break out into recklessness even in matters which were the concern of the State. That they had already begun to exercise an undue influence over their husbands in public affairs seem suggested by old Cato's famous dictum that "all men rule over women, we Romans rule over all men, and our wives rule over us."

But it would be a great mistake to suppose that the men themselves were not equally to blame. Wives do not poison their husbands without some reason for hating them, and the reason is not difficult to guess. It is a fact beyond doubt that in spite of the charm of family life as it has been described above, neither law nor custom exacted conjugal faithfulness from a husband. Old Cato represents fairly well the old idea of Roman virtue, yet it is clear enough, both from Plutarch's *Life* of him and from fragments of his own writings, that his view of the conjugal relation was a coarse one, —that he looked on the wife rather as a necessary agent for providing the State with children than as a helpmate to be tended and revered. And this being so, we are not surprised to find that men are already beginning to dislike and avoid marriage; a most dangerous symptom, with which a century later Augustus found it impossible to cope. In the year 131, just after Tiberius Gracchus had been trying to revive the population of Italy by his agrarian law, Metellus Macedonicus the censor did what he could to induce men to marry

"*liberorum creandorum causa*"; and a fragment of a speech of his on this subject became famous afterwards, as quoted by Augustus with the same object. It is equally characteristic of Roman humour and Roman hardness. "If we could do without wives," he said to the people, "we should be rid of that nuisance: but since nature has decreed that we can neither live comfortably with them nor live at all without them, we must e'en look rather to our permanent interests than to a passing pleasure."'

Now if we take into account these tendencies, on the part both of men and women in the married state, and further consider the stormy and revolutionary character of the half century that succeeded the Gracchi,—the Social and Civil Wars, the proscriptions of Marius and Sulla,—we shall be prepared to find the ladies of Cicero's time by no means simply feminine in charm or homely in disposition. Most of them are indeed mere names to us, and we have to be careful in weighing what is said of them by later writers. But of two or three of them we do in fact know a good deal.

The one of whom we really know most is the wife of Cicero, Terentia: an ordinary lady, of no particular ability or interest, who may stand as representative of the quieter type of married woman. She lived with her husband about thirty years, and until towards the end of that period, a long one for the age, we find nothing substantial against her. If we had nothing but Cicero's letters to her, more than

twenty in number, and his allusions to her in other letters, we should conclude that she was a faithful and on the whole a sensible wife. But more than once he writes of her delicate health, and as the poor lady had at various times a great deal of trouble to go through, it is quite possible that as she grew older she became short in her temper, or trying in other ways to a husband so excitable and vacillating. We find stories of her in Plutarch and elsewhere which represent her as shrewish, too careful of her own money, and so on; but facts are of more account than the gossip of the day, and there is not a sign in the letters that Cicero disliked or mistrusted her until the year 47. Had there really been cause for mistrust it would have slipped out in some letter to Atticus. Then, after his absence during the war, he seems to have believed that she had neglected himself and his interests: his letters to her grow colder and colder, and the last is one which, as has been truly said, a gentleman would not write to his housekeeper. The pity of it is that Cicero, after divorcing her, married a young and rich wife, and does not seem to have behaved very well to her. In a letter to Atticus (xii. 32) he writes that Publilia wanted to come to him with her mother, when he was at Astura, devoting himself to grief for his daughter, and that he had answered that he wished to be let alone. The letter shows Cicero at his worst, for once heartless and discourteous; and if he could be so to a young lady who wished to do her duty by him, what may he not have been

to Terentia? I suspect that Terentia was quite as much sinned against as sinning; and may we not believe that of the innumerable married women who were divorced at this time some at least were the victims of their husband's callousness rather than of their own shortcomings?

The wife of Cicero's brother Quintus does, however, seem to have been a difficult person to get on with. She was a sister of Atticus, but she did not share her brother's tact and universal goodwill. Marcus Cicero has recorded (*ad Att. v.* 1) a scene in which her ill-temper was so ludicrous that the divorce which took place afterwards needs no explanation. The two brothers were traveling together, and Pomponia was with them; something had irritated her. When they stopped to lunch at a place belonging to Quintus at Arcanum, he asked his wife to invite the ladies of the party in. "Nothing, as I thought, could be more courteous, and that too not only in actual words, but in his intention and the expression of his face. But she, in the hearing of us all, exclaimed, 'I am only a stranger here!'" Apparently she had not been asked by her husband to see after the luncheon; this had been done by a freedman, and she was annoyed. "There," said Quintus, "that is what I have to put up with every day!" When he sent her dishes from the *triclinium*, where the gentlemen were having their meal, she would not taste them. This little domestic contretemps is too good to be neglected, but we must turn to women of greater note and character.

Terentia and Pomponia and their kind seem to have had nothing in the way of "higher education," nor do their husbands seem to have expected from them any desire to share in their own intellectual interests. Not once does Cicero allude to any pleasant social intercourse in which his wife took part: and, to say the truth, he would probably have avoided marriage with a woman of taste and knowledge. There were such women, as we shall see, probably many of them; ever since the incoming of wealth and of Greek education, of theatres and amusements and all the pleasant out-of-door life of the city, what was now coming to be called *cultus* had occupied the minds and affected the habits of Roman ladies as well as men. Unfortunately it was seldom that it was found compatible with the old Roman ideal of the *mater-familias* and her duties. The invasion of new manners was too sudden, as was the corresponding invasion of wealth; such a lady as Cornelia, the famous mother of the Gracchi, who knew what education really meant, who had learned men about her and could write well herself, and yet could combine with these qualities the careful discharge of the duties of wife and mother,—such ladies must have been rare, and in Cicero's time hardly to be found. More and more the notion gained ground that a clever woman who wished to make a figure in society, to be the centre of her own *monde*, could not well realise her ambition simply as a married woman. She would probably marry, play fast and loose with the married state, neglect her chil-

dren if she had any and after one or two divorces, die or disappear. So powerfully did this idea of the incompatibility of culture and wifehood gain possession of the Roman mind in the last century B. C., that Augustus found his struggle with it the most difficult task he had to face; in vain he exiled Ovid for publishing a work in which married women are most frankly and explicitly left out of account, while all that is attractive in the other sex to a man of taste and education is assumed to be found only among those who have, so far at least, eschewed the duties and burdens of married life. The *culta puella* and the *cultus puer* of Ovid's fascinating yet repulsive poem are the products of a society which looks on pleasure, not reason or duty, as the main end of life,—not indeed pleasure simply of the grosser type, but the gratification of one's own wish for enjoyment and excitement, without a thought of the misery all around, or any sense of the self-respect that comes of active well-doing.

The most notable example of a woman of *cultus* in Cicero's day was the famous Clodia, the Lesbia (as we may now almost assume) who fascinated Catullus and then threw him over. She had been married to a man of family and high station, Metellus Celler, who had died, strange to say, without divorcing her. She must have been a woman of great beauty and charm, for she seems to have attracted round her a little cŏterie of clever young men and poets, to whom she could lend money or accord praise as suited the moment. Whether

Cicero himself had once come within reach of her attractions, and perhaps suffered by them, is an open question, and depends chiefly on statements of Plutarch which may (as has been said above) have no better foundation than the gossip of society. But we know how two typical young men of the time, Caelius and Catullus, flew into the candle and were singed; we know how fiercely she turned on Caelius, exposing herself and him without a moment's hesitation in a public court; and we know how cruelly she treated the poet, who hated her for it even while he still loved her.

Odi et amo. Quare id faciam, fortasse requiris;
Nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.
Catull. 85.

She was, as M. Boissier has well said, the exact counterpart of her still more famous brother: "Elle apportait dans sa conduite privée, dans ses engagements d'affection, les mêmes emportements et les mêmes ardeurs que son frère dans la vie publique. Prompte a tous les excès et ne rougissant pas de les avouer, aimant et haissant avec fureur, incapable de se gouverner et détestant toute contrainte, elle ne démentait pas cette grande et fière famille dont elle descendait." All this is true; we need not go beyond it and believe the worst that has been said of her.

We have just a glimpse of another lady of *cultus*, but only a glimpse. The was Sempronia, the wife of an honest man and the mother of another; but according to Sallust, who introduces her to us as a principal in the

conspiracy of Catiline, she was one of those who found steady married life incompatible with literary and artistic tastes. "She could play and dance more elegantly than an honest woman should . . . she played fast and loose with her money, and equally so with her good fame. She had no scruples, he says, in denying a debt, or in helping in a murder: yet she had plenty of *esprit*, could write verses and talk brilliantly, and she knew too how to assume an air of modesty on occasion. Sallust loved to colour his portraits highly, and in painting this woman he saw no doubt a chance of literary effect; but that she was really in the conspiracy we cannot doubt, and that she had private ends to gain by it is also probable. She seems to be the first of a series of ladies who during the next century and later were to be a power in politics, and most of whom were at least capable of crime, public and private. There is indeed one instance a few years earlier of a woman exercising an almost supreme influence in the State, and a woman too of the worst kind. Plutarch tells us in the most explicit way that when Lucullus in 65 B. C. was trying to secure for himself the command against Mithridates, he found himself compelled to apply to a woman named Praecia, whose social gifts and good nature gave her immense influence, which she used with the pertinacity peculiar to such ladies. Her reputation, however, was very bad, and among other lovers she had enslaved Cethegus (afterwards the conspirator), whose power at the time was immense at Rome. Thus, says

Plutarch, the whole power of the State fell into the hands of Praecia, for no public measure was passed if Cethegus was not for it, in other words, if Praecia did not recommend it to him. If the story be true, as it seems to be, Lucullus gained her over by gifts and flattery, and thus Cethegus took up his cause and got him the command.

Even if we put aside as untrustworthy a great deal of what is told us of the relations of men and women in this period, it must be confessed that there is quite sufficient evidence to show that they were loose in the extreme, and show an altogether unhealthy condition of family and social life. The famous tigress of the story of Cluentius, Sassia, as she appears in Cicero's defence of him, was beyond doubt a criminal of the worst kind; however much we may discount the orator's rhetoric; and her case proves that the evil did not exist only at Rome, but was to be found even in a provincial town of no great importance. Husbands divorced their wives on the smallest pretexts, and wives divorced their husbands. Even the virtuous Cato seems to have divorced his wife Marcia in order that Hortensius should marry her, and after some years to have married her again as the widow of Hortensius, with a large fortune.

Cicero himself writes sometimes in the lightest hearted way of conjugal relations which we should think most serious, and we find him telling Atticus how he had met at dinner the actress Cytheris, a woman of notoriously bad character. "I did not know she was going to

be there," he says, "but even the Socratic Aristippus himself did not blush when he was taunted about Lais." Caesar's reputation in such matters was at all times bad, and though many of the stories about him are manifestly false, his conquest by Cleopatra was a fact, and we learn with regret that the Egyptian queen was living in a villa of his in gardens beyond the Tiber during the year 46, when he was himself in Rome.

It will be a relief to the reader, after spending so much time in this unwholesome atmosphere, to turn for a moment in the last place to a record, unique and entirely credible, of a truly good and wholesome woman, and of a long period of uninterrupted conjugal devotion. About the year 8 B. C., not long before Ovid wrote those poems in which married life was assumed to be hardly worth living, a husband in high life at Rome lost the wife who had for forty-one years been his faithful companion in prosperity, his wise and courageous counsellor in adversity. He recorded her praises and the story of her devotion to him in a long inscription, placed, as we may suppose, on the wall of the tomb in which he laid her to rest, and a most fortunate chance has preserved for us a great part of the marble on which this inscription was engraved. It is in the form of a laudatio, or funeral encomium; yet we cannot feel sure that he actually delivered it as a speech, for throughout it he addresses, not an audience, but the lost wife herself, in a manner unique among such documents of the kind as have come down to us. He speaks to her as

though she were still living, though passed from his sight; and it is just this that makes it more real and more touching than any memorial of the dead that has come down to us from either Italy or Greece.

In such a record names are of no great importance; it is no great misfortune that we do not know quite for certain who this man and his wife were. But there is a very strong probability that her name was Turia, and that he was a certain Q. Lucretius Vespillo, who served under Pompeius in Epirus in 48 B. C., whose romantic adventures in the proscriptions of 43 are recorded by Appian, and who eventually became consul under Augustus in 19 B. C. We may venture to use these names in telling the remarkable story. For telling it here no apology is needed, for it has never been told in English as a whole, so far as I am aware.

It begins when the pair were about to be married, probably in 49 B. C., and with a horrible family calamity, not unnatural at the moment of the outbreak of a dangerous civil war. Both Turia's parents were murdered suddenly and together at their country residence—perhaps, as Mommsen suggested, by their own slaves. Immediately afterwards Lucretius had to leave with Pompeius' army for Epirus, and Turia was left alone, bereft of both her parents, to do what she could to secure the punishment of the murderers. Alone as she was, or aided only by a married sister she at once showed the courage and energy which are obvious in all we hear of her. She seems to have succeeded in tracking the assassins and bringing

them to justice: "even if I had been there myself," says her husband, "I could have done no more."

But this was by no means the only dangerous task she had to undertake in those years of civil war and insecurity. When Lucretius left her they seem to have been staying at the villa where her parents had been murdered; she had given him all her gold and pearls, and kept him supplied in his absence with money, provisions, and even slaves, which she contrived to smuggle over sea to Epirus. And during the march of Caesar's army through Italy she seems to have been threatened, either in that villa or another, by some detachment of his troops, and to have escaped only through her own courage and the clemency of one whose name is not mentioned, but who can hardly be other than the great Julius himself, a true gentleman, whose instinct and policy alike it was throughout this civil war to be merciful to opponents.

A year later, while Lucretius was still away, yet another peril came upon her. While Cæsar was operating round Dyrrhachium, there was a dangerous rising in Campania and Southern Italy, for which our giddy friend Cælius Rufus was chiefly responsible; gladiators and ruffianly shepherd slaves were enlisted, and by some of these the villa where she was staying was attacked, and successfully defended by her,—so much at least it seems possible to infer from the fragments recently discovered.

One might think that Turia had already had her full share of trouble and danger, but there is much more to come. About this time she had

to defend herself against another attack, not indeed on her person, but as her rights as an heiress. An attempt was made by her relations to upset her father's will, under which she and Lucretius were appointed equal inheritors of his property. The result of this would have been to make her the sole heiress, leaving out her husband and her married sister; but she would have been under the legal *tutela* or guardianship of persons whose motive in attacking the will was to obtain administration of the property. No doubt they meant to administer it for their own advantage; and it was absolutely necessary that she should resist them. How she did it her husband does not tell us, but he says that the enemy retreated from his position, yielding to her firmness and perseverance (*constantia*). The patrimonium came, as her father had intended, to herself and her husband; and he dwells on the care with which they dealt with it, he exercising a *tutela* over her share, while she exercised a *custodia* over his. Very touchingly he adds, "but of this I leave much unsaid, lest I should seem to be claiming a share in the praise that is due to you alone."

When Lucretius returned to Italy, apparently pardoned by Caesar for the part he had taken against him, the marriage must have been consummated. Then came the murder of the Dictator, which plunged Italy once more into civil war, until in 43 Antony, Octavian and Lepidus made their famous compact, and at once proceeded to that abominable work of proscription which made a regin of terror at

Rome, and spilt much of the best Roman blood. The happiness of the pair was suddenly destroyed, for Lucretius found himself named in the fatal lists. He seems to have been in the country, not far from Rome, when he received a message from his wife, telling him of impending peril that he might have to face at any moment, and warning him strongly against a certain rash course—perhaps an attempt to escape to Sextus Pompeius in Sicily, a course which cost the lives of many deluded victims. She implored him to return to their own house in Rome, where she had devised a secure hiding-place for him. She meant no doubt to die with him there if he were discovered.

He obeyed his good genius and made for Rome, by night it would seem, with only two faithful slaves. One of these fell lame and had to be left behind; and Lucretius, leaning on the arm of the other, approached the city gate. Suddenly they became aware of a troop of soldiers issuing from it, and Lucretius took refuge in one of the many tombs that lined the great roads outside the walls. They had not been long in this dismal hiding when they were surprised by a party of tomb-wreckers—ghouls who haunted these roads by night and lived by robbing tombs of travellers. Luckily they wanted rather to rob than to murder, and the slave gave himself up to them to be stripped, while his master, who was no doubt disguised, perhaps as a slave, contrived to slip out of their hands and reached the city gate safely. Here he waited, as we might expect him to do, for his brave companion, and then succeeded in

making his way into the city and to his house, where his wife concealed him between the roof and the ceiling of one of their bedrooms, until the storm should blow over.

But neither life nor property was safe until some pardon and restitution were obtained from one at least of the triumvirs. When at last these were conceded by Octavian, he was himself absent in the campaign that ended with Phillippi, and Lepidus was consul in charge of Rome. To Lepidus Turia had to go, to beg the confirmation of Octavian's grace, and this brutal man received her with insult and injury. She fell at his feet, as her husband describes with bitter indignation, but instead of being raised and congratulated, she was hustled, beaten like a slave, and driven from his presence. But her perservance had its ultimate reward. The clemency of Octavian prevailed on his return to Italy, and this treatment of a lady was among the many crimes that called for the eventual degradation of Lepidus.

This was the last of their perilous escapes. A long period of happy life awaited them, more particularly after the battle of Actium, when "peace and the republic were restored." One thing only was wanting to complete their perfect felicity—they had no children. It was this that caused Turia to make a proposal to her husband which, coming from a truly unselfish woman, and seen in the light of Roman ideas of married life, is far from unnatural; but to us it must seem astonishing, and it filled Lucretious with horror. She urged that he should divorce her, and take another wife in the hope

of a son and heir. If there is nothing very surprising in this from a Roman point of view, it is indeed to us both surprising and touching that she should have supported her request by a promise that she would be as much a mother to the expected children as their own mother, and would still be to Lucretius a sister, having nothing apart from him, nothing secret, and taking away with her no part of their inheritance.

To us, reading this proposal in cold blood just nineteen hundred years after it was made, it may seem foolishly impracticable; to her, whose whole life was spent in unselfish devotion to her husband's interests, whose warm love for him was always mingled with discretion, it was simply an act of *pietas*—of wifely duty. Yet he could not for a moment think so himself; his indignation at the bare idea of it lives for ever on the marble in glowing words. "I must confess," he says, "that the anger so burnt within me that my senses almost deserted me: that you should ever have thought it possible that we could be separated but to death, was most horrible to me. What was the need of children compared with my loyalty to you: why should I exchange certain happiness for an uncertain future? But I say no more of this: you remained with me, for I could not yield without disgrace to myself and unhappiness to both of us. The one sorrow that was in store for me was that I was destined to survive you."

These two, we may feel sure, were wholly worthy of each other. What she would have

said of him, if he had been the first to go, we can only guess: but he has left a portrait of her, as she lived and worked in his household, which, mutilated though it is, may be inadequately paraphrased as follows:

"You were a faithful wife to me," he says, "and an obedient one: you were kind and gracious, sociable and friendly: you were assiduous at your spinning (*lanificia*): you followed the religious rites of your family and your state, and admitted no foreign cults or degraded magic (*supersitio*): you did not dress conspicuously, nor seek to make a display in your household arrangements. Your duty to our whole household was exemplary: you tended my mother as carefully as if she had been your own. You had innumerable other excellences, in common with all other worthy matrons, but these I have mentioned were peculiarly yours."

No one can study this inscription without becoming convinced that it tells an unvarnished tale of truth—that here was really a rare and precious woman; a Roman matron of the very best type, practical, judicious, courageous, simple in her habits and courteous to all her guests. And we feel that there is one human being, and one only, of whom she is always thinking, to whom she has given her whole heart—the husband whose words and deeds show that he was wholly worthy of her.

# WOMAN IN HISTORY

LESTER F. WARD

The series of influences which we have been describing had the effect to fasten upon the human mind the habit of thought which I call the androcentric world view, and this has persistently clung to the race until it forms to-day the substratum of all thought and action. So universal is this attitude that a presentation of the real and fundamental relation of the sexes is something new to those who are able to see it and something preposterous to those who are not. The idea that the female is naturally and really the superior sex seems incredible, and only the most liberal and emancipated minds, possessed of a large store of biological information, are capable of realizing it. At the beginning of the historical period woman was under complete subjection to man. She had so long been a mere slave and drudge that she had lost all the higher attributes that she originally possessed, and in order to furnish an excuse for degrading and abusing her men had imputed to her a great array of false, evil qualities that tended to make her despise herself. All and books of law, all the traditional epics, all Oriental literature, all the ancient sacred books the literature of Greek and Roman antiquity and in fact all that was written during the middle ages, and much of the literature of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries, teem with epithets, slurs, flings, and open con-

demnations of women as beings in some manner vile and hateful, often malicious and evil disposed, and usually endowed with some superstitious priests of a miracle-based cult. Near the end of the fifteenth century a certain book appeared, entitled, "The Witch Hammer," which received the sanction of Pope Innocent VIII, and formed the companion to a bull against witches issued by him. The following is a sample passage from this book:

"'The old fathers have often said that there are three things that have no moderation in good or evil—the *tongue*, a *priest*, and a *woman*. Concerning woman this is evident. All ages have made complaints against her. The wise Solomon, who was himself tempted to idolatry by woman, has often in his writings given the feminine sex a sad but true testimonial; and the holy Chrysostom says: 'What is woman but an enemy of friendship, an unavoidable punishment, a necessary evil, a natural temptation, a desirable affliction, a constantly flowing source of tears, a wicked work of nature covered with a shining varnish?' Already had the first woman entered into a sort of compact with the devil; should not, then, her daughters do it also? The very word *femina* (woman) means *one wanting in faith;* for *fe* means 'faith' and *minus* 'less.' Since she was formed of a crooked rib, her entire spiritual nature has been distorted and inclined more toward sin than virtue. If we here compare the words of Seneca, 'Women either loves or hates; there is no third possibility,' it is easy to see that when she does not love God

she must resort to the opposite extreme and hate Him. It is thus clear why women especially are addicted to the practice of sorcery. The crime of witches exceeds all others. They are worse than the devil, for he has fallen once for all, and Christ has not suffered for him. The devil sins, therefore, only against the Creator, but the witch both against the Creator and Redeemer."

The Hebrew Bible myth of the rib has been made a potent instrument for the subjection of women. Bossuet in his "Élévations sur les Mystères," uttered the following classical note which had since been hurled at woman on every possible occasion:

"Let women consider their origin and not boast too much of their delicacy; let them remember that they are after all only a supernumerary bone, in which there is no beauty but that which God wished to put into it."

Among these characteristic fables we give the first place to the one that has been preserved for us by the Bible, and according to which woman was a secondary creation of God; she was formed out of a rib of man which justifies her domination by him. That is probably one of the most ancient examples proving that a *de facto* domination is never embarrassed in proving its "right."

The literature and thought of India is thoroughly hostile to woman. A large number of proverbs attest this widespread misogyny. "Woman is like a slipper made to order; wear it if it fits you, throw it away if it does not." "You can never be safe from the cunning

artifices of woman." "Woman is like a snake, charming as well as venomous." Hebrew literature breathes the same spirit, and the reading of the Bible often brings the colour to the cheeks of a liberal-minded person of either sex. Arabian magic is even worse in this respect, and is so erotic that it is next to impossible to obtain an unexpurgated text of the Arabian Nights Entertainments, about 75 per cent of the matter being expunged from all current editions. The androcentric world view may almost be said to have its headquarters in India. The "Code of Manu" reflects it throughout. According to it "Woman depends during her childhood upon her father; during her youth upon her husband; in her widowhood upon her sons or her male relatives; in default of these, upon the sovereign." "She should always be in good humour and revere her husband, even though unfaithful, as a god."

"If a widow she must not even pronounce the name of another man than her deceased husband." The husband always addressed his wife as servant or slave, while she must address him as master or lord. The same code declares that "it is in the nature of the feminine sex to seek to corrupt men," and forbids any man to remain in any place alone with his sister, his mother, or his daughter. Even at the present day in India, free choice, especially of the woman, has nothing to do with marriage, and parents and families arbitrarily dispose of the girls, often at a very tender age.

Modern countries differ somewhat in the pre-

vailing ideas about women. No statement is more frequently repeated than that in any country the treatment of women is a true measure of civilisation. It may now be added to this that the treatment of women is a true measure of the intensity of the androcentric sentiment prevailing in any country. It might be invidious to attempt to classify modern nations on this basis, especially as individuals in any country differ so widely in this respect. It is a measure of civilisation or civility in individuals as well as in nations, and in every nation there are thoroughly liberal and fully civilised individuals. Neither can the nineteenth and twentieth centuries claim them all, as we have seen in the noble sayings of Condorcet, who was probably the most civilised man of his time, far more so than Comte who made him his spiritual father, but did not share his liberality. In placing Germany at the bottom of the scale in this basis of classification, therefore, numberless shining exceptions must be made, and account taken only of the general spirit or public opinion relative to women in that country. The German attitude toward women was perhaps typified by the father of Frederick the Great, of whom it is related as among his sterling qualities, that when he met a woman in the street he would walk up to her with his cane raised, saying: "Go back into the house! an honest woman should keep in doors."

Spencer says:—

"Concerning the claims of women, as domestically associated with men, I may add that

here in England, and still more in America, the need for urging them is not pressing. In some cases, indeed, there is a converse need. But there are other civilised societies in which their claims are very inadequately recognised: instance Germany."

To which he appends the following footnote:—

"With other reasons prompting this remark, is joined the remembrance of a conversation between two Germans in which, with contemptuous laughter, they were describing how, in England, they had often seen on a Sunday or other holiday, an artizan relieving his wife by carrying the child they had with them. Their sneers produced in me a feeling of shame —but not for the artizan."

Germans as a rule detest American women for their initiative and boldness, daring to act and think independently of their husbands and of men generally, and they apply to them the strongest term of contempt that they have in their language in characterising them as *emanciprit*. Women is much more respected in France; but under Napoleon and his code there was a recoil toward barbarism. Napoleon said to the Council of State that "a husband should have absolute power over the actions of his wife." In the "Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène," he is quoted to the following effect:—

"Woman is given to man to bring forth children. Woman is our property; we are not hers; for she gives us children and man does not give

any to her. She is therefore his property, as the tree is that of the gardener. . . . A single woman cannot suffice for a man for that purpose. She cannot be his wife when she is sick. She ceases to be his wife when she can no longer give him children. Man, whom nature does not arrest either by age or by any of these inconveniences, should, therefore, have several wives."

Only a part of the oppressive laws of the code Napoleon have been repealed, but public opinion in France is far in advance of its laws, and judging from outward indications, I should be inclined to place that country next to the United States, as the most highly civilised nation of the globe. In this I am only uttering the views long ago put forth with large documentary support by Guizot.

Throughout the historic period woman has suffered from a consistent, systematic, and universal discrimination in the laws of all countries. In all the early codes she was herself a hereditament, and when she ceased to be a chattel she was not allowed to inherit property, or was cut down to a very small share in the estate. In this and many other ways her economic dependence has been made more or less complete. Letourneau has enumerated many of these discriminating laws, and we have only to turn the pages of the law books to find them everywhere. When a student of law I scheduled scores of them, and could fill a dozen pages with a bare enumeration of such as still form part of the common law of Eng-

land as taught to law classes even in the United States. All this is simply the embodiment in the jurisprudence of nations of the universal androcentric world view, and it has been unquestioningly acquiesced in by all mankind, including the women themselves.

The Anglo-Saxon word woman reflects this world view, showing that it is older than the stock of languages from which this word is derived. For although it is no longer believed by philologists that the first syllable of this word has anything to do with *womb*, still it is certain that the last syllable is the same as the German *Mann*, not *Mensch*, and that the rest signifies wife or female, as though man were the original and woman only a secondary creation. As regards the Latin *femina*, while, of course, it has no connection with *faith* or *minus*, as stated in the "Witch Hammer," still the syllable *fe* is the hypothetical root from which *fecundity* comes, and the word signifies the fertile sex. Primarily no such conceptions as beauty, grace, delicacy, and attractiveness are associated with woman, and all notions of dignity, honour, and worth are equally wanting from the conception of the female sex. On the contrary, we find many terms of reproach, such as wench, hag, etc., for which there are no corresponding ones applicable to man.

Notwithstanding all this vast network of bonds that have been contrived for holding woman down, it is peculiar and significant that everywhere and always she has been tacitly credited with a certain mysterious power in

which the world has, as it were, stood in awe and fear. While perpetually proclaiming her inferiority, insignificance, and weakness, it has by its precautions virtually recognised her potential importance and real strength. She is the cause of wars and race hostilities. There are always powerful female deities. Minerva is even made the goddess of wisdom. Ever and anon a great female personage, real or fictitious, appears, a Semiramis, a Cleopatra, a Joan of Arc, a Queen Elizabeth, or a Queen Victoria; Scheherazade with her thousand and one tales, Sibyls with their divinations and oracles, Furies and Gorgons; and finally the witches with all their powers for evil. Although woman is usually pictured as bad, still there is no uncertainty about the supposed possession by her of some occult power, and the impression is constantly conveyed that she must be strenuously kept down, lest should she by any accident or remissness chance to "get loose," she would certainly do something dreadful.

One of the arguments most relied upon for the justification of the continued subjection of woman is that, in addition to being physically inferior to man, the differences between the sexes have been widening during past ages and are greater in civilised than in savage peoples. The investigations of Professor Le Bon have been widely quoted by all writers on the general subject. He found that the difference between the respective weight of the brain in man and woman constantly goes on increasing as we rise in the scale of civilisation, so that as regards the mass of the brain,

and consequently the intelligence, woman becomes more and more differentiated from man. The difference which exists between the mean of the crania of contemporary Parisian men and that of contemporary Parisian women is almost double the difference which existed in ancient Egypt. Topinard finds the same to to be true of the fossil crania of prehistoric times. In certain South American tribes the sexes scarcely differ except in sex itself. According to Manouvrier, the cranial capacity of women has diminished from 1422 cubic centimeters in the stone age to 1333 cubic centimeters at the present day.

Accepting these statements as in all probability correct, what is the lesson that should really be drawn from them? Letourneau argues that the difference between the life that women must lead in roving hordes and bands, doing most of the work to relieve the men for hunting and war, necessitated stronger bodies than modern civilised life requires for women. This is also doubtless true, and civilised woman would quickly succumb to such hardships. But is this an adequate explanation? I think not. We must remember how much nearer savage man is to the gynaecocratic stage, in which there is every reason to believe woman was nearly equal in strength to man. If the prehuman or animal stage saw the excessive development of the male, the earliest human stage found woman unchanged and in the full vigour of her natural strength, still choosing her mates and governing the life of the horde. But with the advent of the androcratic stage,

while woman lost her power of selection, so that man could develop no farther, the abuses to which he subjected her soon began to tell upon her and produce degeneracy. In Chapter X we consider the effect of adverse conditions upon man in general, and saw how the status of a class might be lowered by insufficient nourishment and undue toil and exposure, which accounts for the superiority of the ruling and leisure classes. Now in the androcratic régime woman dropped into the condition of a subject class and was denied much that was necessary to maintain her normal existence. It is well known that savage women are usually underfed, that they are allowed no luxuries, made to subsist on the leavings of the men at whose table they are never permitted to sit, often have no meat or fish when the men have those articles, that they have little rest, must carry wood and water, drag lodge poles, and care for the children, besides preparing the meals for all, that they are insufficiently clothed in countries where clothing is needed, and that they are during their entire lives subjected to perpetual hardships and privations. Of course, as they bear the children, all this reacts upon both sexes, but in the long run it affects the women more than the men who have ways of offsetting it, and in the course of generations it arrests female development and stunts the growth of women.

When we come to the historic period we have seen how universal and systematic has always been the suppression of woman and her legal and social exclusion and ostracism from

everything that tends to build up either body or mind. When I reflect upon it the wonder to me is rather that women has accomplished anything at all. The small amount that she has been allowed to use her mind has almost caused it to be atrophied. This alone is sufficient to account for all the facts enumerated above as supporting the androcentric theory, so far as the intellectual achievements of women are concerned. M. Jacques Lourbet in his "Problème des Sexes" (Paris, 1900), says:

"Let no one insist longer on the modest contribution of woman to the creative work of art and science. She suffers to this day from the ostracism of centuries that man has imposed upon her, from the network of exclusions and prohibitions of every kind in which she has been enveloped and which have ended in producing that apparent inferiority, which is not natural but purely hereditary."

Professor Huxley, in a letter to the *London Times* relative to the failure of a certain lady in her examination, remarked:

"Without seeing any reason to believe that women are, on the average, so strong physically, intellectually, or morally, as men, I cannot shut my eyes to the obvious fact that many women are much better endowed in all these respects than many men, and I am at a loss to understand on what grounds of justice or public policy a career which is open to the weakest and most foolish of the male sex should be forcibly closed to women of vigour and capacity. We have heard a great deal lately about the physical disabilities of women.

Some of these alleged impediments, no doubt, are really inherent in their organization, but nine-tenths of them are artificial—the product of their mode of life. I believe that nothing would tend so effectively to get rid of these creations of idleness, weariness, and that 'overstimulation of the emotions,' which, in plainer-spoken days, used to be called wantonness, than a fair share of healthy work, directed toward a definite object, combined with an equally fair share of healthy play, during the years of adolescence; and those who are best acquainted with the acquirements of an average medical practitioner, will find it hardest to believe that the attempt to reach that standard is likely to prove exhausting to an ordinarily intelligent and well-educated young woman."

It would seem that the treatment that woman has received and still receives under the operation of the androcentric world view is amply sufficient of itself to account for all the observed differences between the sexes physically and mentally, and that the widening of those differences during the historic period is abundantly accounted for by the fact that the gynaecocratic stage persisted far into the human period, during which women were the equals of men except in respect of certain embellishments attending male afflorescence due to prolonged female sexual selection or gyneclexis. When this was withdrawn man ceased to advance and woman began to decline under the depressing effects of male abuse. But there was another element that contributed in the main to the same result. This was male sexual

selection or andrecloxis, which, as we have seen, was confined to physical characters, and while it has given to woman all the beauty and grace that she possesses, it tended rather to dwarf her stature, sap her strength, contract her brain, and enfeeble her mind. In these two principles, the first dating from the origin of the patriarchate during the protosocial stage, and the other dating from the origin of the leisure class early in the metasocial stage, and both therefore in operation at least twice as long, probably many times as long, as the entire historic period, we certainly have a surplus of influence bearing on the deterioration of woman, and a more than adequate cause for all inferiority ever claimed or alleged by the supporters of the androcentric theory. Indeed, as we contemplate these factors the wonder grows why woman did not sink still lower. The only possible reason is that, despite all, she is and remains the human race.